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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 BRUSSELS 000651

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NATO, AF, PK

SUBJECT: SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE HOLBROOKE MEETS WITH
EUROPEAN UNION LEADERS

REF: A. BRUSSELS 362
[1B.](#) SECSTATE 28929

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Chris Davis for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Ambassador Richard Holbrooke met with European Union leaders on March 23 during his first visit to Brussels as Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. He expressed appreciation for EU support to Afghanistan and Pakistan, applauded the EU for deploying the only international observation mission for the 2008 elections in Pakistan, and urged the EU to deploy an election monitoring mission to Afghanistan for the August 2009 presidential elections. He also asked the EU to endorse the view shared by the United States and UN that Afghan President Karzai should remain in power through the completion of the presidential elections, as the best way to deal with a possible constitutional crisis.

¶2. (C) Amb. Holbrooke stressed that Europe needs to do much more on police training. He said that the U.S. is favorably inclined toward France's gendarmerie training proposal, but emphasized that U.S., NATO, and EU efforts should be not only coordinated, but integrated. He noted that Europe is "extremely good" at training civil servants and asked what more the EU can do to build government capacity. He also stressed that EU assistance to Pakistan is too low; he urged the EC to increase its current assistance levels of approximately 50 million EURO per year for Pakistan, given Pakistan's importance to European security. He also asked European Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner to attend the April 17 Pakistan Donors Conference in Tokyo. Amb. Holbrooke described his visit to Brussels as "just the beginning" of U.S. efforts with the EU, not the end. End Summary.

Ambassador Holbrooke addresses the EU

¶3. (U) The European Union's Political and Security Committee (PSC), composed of Ambassadors from all 27 EU member states, convened in extraordinary session on March

23 to receive Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke. Also present were EU Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Ettore Francesco Sequi; EU Director General for Political and External Affairs Robert Cooper; Commission Representative to the Political and Security Committee Richard Wright; Civilian Operations Commander Kees Klompenhouwer; and Swedish Envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan Anna Karin Enestrom. Separately, Ambassador Holbrooke met with EU High Representative Javier Solana and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner. Amb. Holbrooke thanked the EU for its efforts in Afghanistan and Pakistan, adding that we cannot succeed in Afghanistan without also succeeding in Pakistan.

Afghan Elections

¶4. (C) Amb. Holbrooke applauded the EU for deploying the only international election observation mission to Pakistan for its 2008 election. He expressed hope the EU would send a similar mission to Afghanistan for the August 20, 2009 election and that the United States, EU, and UN would work together to support a free and fair election. He noted that Ambassador Tim Carney would lead the U.S. election assistance effort. In response, European Commission Representative Richard Wright said the EU would play a major role preparing and conducting the Afghan elections in 2009, but stressed the Commission was counting on ISAF to secure the

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elections. He added that the Commission also planned to cover much of the USD 50 million financing gap identified by Vice President Biden on his visit to Brussels (REF A). In a separate meeting, Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner told Amb. Holbrooke the Commission would provide 40 million EURO for election financing.

¶5. (C) Amb. Holbrooke also raised with EU Ambassadors and Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner the debate surrounding political arrangements for the period between May 22, when President Karzai's constitutional term ends, and the August 20 elections, as well as a probable second round of elections in October, 2009. He explained that the United States strongly believes President Karzai should remain in power to ensure government continuity. He expressed hope the EU would publicly support this position, which UN Special Representative Kai Eide endorsed March 22. EU Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Ettore Sequi said the EU would take a position following internal consultations. Amb. Holbrooke noted that in order to clearly establish the international community's neutrality in the election, all partners in Afghanistan must insist on equal access by each candidate to media, military aircraft, etc.

Police-----

¶6. (C) EU Civilian Operations Commander Kees Klompenhouwer said the EU Police Mission for Afghanistan (EUPOL) was working on reforming the Afghan Ministry of Interior, in line with Interior Minister Atmar's priorities. Klompenhouwer described EUPOL as working from Kabul out to the provinces. He noted EUPOL was also working with the Kabul City police and with border police at airports. The Danish Ambassador added that EUPOL and CSTC-A had greatly improved their coordination recently. The French Ambassador said, "We must be better coordinated and do more on police", which is why, she added, France has proposed sending a gendarmerie force, which would complement EUPOL activities. She noted France was still looking at financing and security arrangements that would allow for

deployment at the district level.

¶ 7. (C) Amb. Holbrooke stressed that everyone agrees increasing the size and quality of the Afghan National Police is essential. He said EUPOL is excellent, but we all need to do more. He called the planned plus-up of the EUPOL mission to 400 personnel "a great start". He said the United States was favorably inclined to support the French proposal on policing, but expressed hope partners would consider a system to integrate U.S., NATO, and EU efforts.

¶ 8. (C) Regarding police salaries, Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner told Amb. Holbrooke that the Commission pays a large percentage of Afghan police salaries through the Law and Order Trust Fund (LOTFA). Holbrooke countered that Japan had just committed to pay 100% of police salaries from June until the end of 2009. Ferrero-Waldner and her staff said they were unaware of Japan's commitment and that they would contact their Japanese counterparts to coordinate. They noted this development could free up their money to be applied to police salaries beginning in 2010 or to another project. Ferrero-Waldner said she had been planning to contribute an additional 15 million EURO to LOTFA, but that the Commission would coordinate with the Japanese on this issue.

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Financial Assistance to Afghanistan and Pakistan

¶ 9. (C) Amb. Holbrooke commended the EU for all of its assistance to Afghanistan, noting that the European Commission alone was a major donor, setting aside the additional support from EU member states. However, he stressed that the United States would increase its non-military financial assistance to both Afghanistan and Pakistan, and hoped the EU would follow suit, particularly for Pakistan. Considering the centrality of Afghanistan and Pakistan to Europe's security and the fact that the EU is Pakistan's largest trading partner, Amb. Holbrooke suggested the EU should give more to Pakistan. He noted the United States is looking at providing "billions of dollars" in non-military assistance to Pakistan and said that the EU's assistance levels of approximately 50 million EURO per year was not enough.

¶ 10. (C) To Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner, he reiterated that the EC should make a greater contribution as part of a massive assistance program for the tribal areas. In response, Ferrero-Waldner noted the current Commission assistance levels already represented a significant increase in EC funding for Pakistan, and additional money was scarce. She explained that there was a fixed budget for EC assistance to all of Asia, and that Afghanistan and Pakistan combined received one-third of the EC's overall assistance to Asia. Holbrooke acknowledged the difficulty, but called for prioritizing Pakistan and the FATA. Ferrero-Waldner explained that Commission programs were centered in Baluchistan and the Northwest Frontier Province, with a focus on education and rural development. She noted that security conditions made project implementation difficult. She also mentioned that the Commission would provide Pakistan with an additional 50 million EURO in food aid for the 2007-2010 budget cycle.

¶ 11. (C) Regarding assistance to Afghanistan, Ferrero-Waldner told Amb. Holbrooke that the EU (Commission and member states combined) has pledged a total of 8 billion EURO in non-military assistance to Afghanistan since 2001, of which 3.5 billion EURO have been spent. She further elaborated that the Commission alone provided 1.6 billion EURO to Afghanistan between 2002-2008 and has

committed 700 million EURO for the period 2007-10. She said she planned to "find another 60 million EURO for the period 2009-2011". Amb. Holbrooke said that the 17,000 new troops the United States is sending to Afghanistan will be focused in the south and the east. USG aid programs will also focus on those areas. Given this shift, he asked Europeans to increase their assistance in their "zones of influence" in Afghanistan; for example, Italy could do more in Herat, the Dutch in Uruzgan, and the Germans around Mazar i-Sharif. Holbrooke discussed this concept both in his meeting with PSC ambassadors and later with Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner.

Pakistan Donors Conference

¶12. (C) Amb. Holbrooke urged the EU to contribute generously at the April 17 Pakistan Donors Conference in Tokyo. He also encouraged Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner to attend the conference and proposed a trilateral meeting on April 16 or early morning April 17 between Holbrooke, Ferrero-Waldner, and either the Japanese Foreign Minister or Special Envoy Sadako Ogata or both. Ferrero-Waldner liked the idea, and said she would look into attending the Donors Conference. Note: Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner did attend the Donors Conference. End note.

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Counternarcotics

¶13. (C) Amb. Holbrooke described most of the money the United States has spent on counternarcotics efforts in recent years as wasteful, and said we must do better. He noted that Afghanistan is a heavily agricultural country and asked the EU to help build up Afghanistan's wheat capacity and provide agricultural jobs, particularly as alternative employment to young men otherwise recruited by the Taliban. He also noted that pomegranates and grapes were good cash crops.

¶14. (C) In the meeting with Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner, Holbrooke emphasized that boosting Afghanistan's agricultural capacity was key to decreasing the drug sector. Ferrero-Waldner said the EC planned to designate an additional 24 million EURO (for a two-year period) for the agricultural sector -- to be used for seeds and rural development projects. She noted this was a priority for UN Special Representative Kai Eide as well as for Holbrooke. Ferrero-Waldner cited successful results of EC rural development work aimed at giving farmers alternatives to planting opium poppy. She claimed that as a result of the Commission's project in Nangarhar province, that area was now judged to be largely free of poppy crops. Holbrooke pointed out, however, that the governor in Nangarhar is one of the most corrupt warlords in Afghanistan and that he controls the road that the EU built from Kabul to Jalalabad.

Can The EU Train Afghan Civil Servants?

¶15. (C) Emphasizing the importance of capacity building in Afghanistan, Amb. Holbrooke noted that the EU was extremely good at capacity-building, including training civil servants. Holbrooke posed a hypothetical question whether his meeting with EU Ambassadors could lead to a great effort by the EU to train Afghan civil servants - either bringing them to Europe or conducting training in Afghanistan. If so, Amb. Holbrooke said, "our meeting today will have had great importance".

¶16. (C) The Swedish Ambassador reiterated some of the points Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt made with Vice President Biden on March 10 (REF A), stressing that the UN represents a platform for legitimacy, and the international community should "beef up" the UN role in Afghanistan and back it politically. Many other Ambassadors remarked that coordinating international efforts was essential. Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner noted the importance of pulling together all of the "strands" of different partners' development efforts, a job which she saw as Ambassador Holbrooke's task.

Comment

¶17. (C) Amb. Holbrooke's messages to the EU (reinforced in REF B) and subsequent information the United States has provided the EU regarding our Afghanistan and Pakistan policy review, will figure prominently in the EU's own internal review of Afghanistan and Pakistan policy. One of the EU's goals for the review is to align more closely its approach with that of the United States.

¶18. (U) This cable has been cleared by Special

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Representative Holbrooke's office.
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